



Knowledge grows

THE
UNSPOKEN
SACRED TRUST

SOIL POETRY

How would you describe your relationship to the soil on your farm?

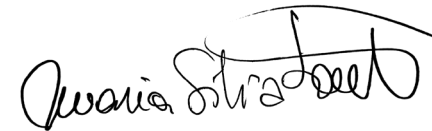
We asked farmers across Europe this question. The answers we got are moving testimonials to a deep and heartfelt relationship between farmers and their soil. A relationship of give and take, of care and worries, and of hard work on both sides. Of the farmers we met, many talked about their soil as a family member. Soil evoked strong feelings. Healthy ground meant happiness, whereas dry, depleted or weed-ridden fields, caused anxiety and sadness. At the core of these emotions was the acute awareness that healthy soil is vital for agriculture.

Sadly, in many areas, soil health has been neglected for generations, threatening crop production, food supply and biodiversity. It is more urgent than ever to restore soil health through regenerative farming practices. Healthy soil is a living ecosystem that sustains the wellbeing of plants, animals, people, and the planet in general. Soil health and vitality are necessary for robust crop production and a sustainable future for farming.


Composed of minerals, organic matter, air, water and living organisms, soils provide a rooting medium and nutrient source for plants. Soils contain a wealth of biodiversity and play a key role in regulating, storing, and filtering water. Additionally, because of their ability to store carbon, soils play an important role in climate change mitigation. Soil quality or soil fertility typically refers to the ecosystem services soils provide, such as adequate crop yields.

The farmers that you meet in this book have one thing in common – improve and maintain good soil health as top of their priority. They deal with the challenges of climate change, drought, or floods by restoring soil health through regenerative practices. That is how they secure resilient crops and the prosperity and longevity of their livelihoods. The thoughts and feelings shared in this book are an inspiration to us. We all owe these farmers gratitude for the attention, affection and care they give to their soils.

At Yara we stand by all farmers in their hard work to improve and maintain soil health and vitality.



Maria Silvia Tonti
Vice President Center of Competence for Regenerative Agriculture and Carbon
Yara International

A close-up photograph of dark, rich soil. Several earthworms are visible, some partially buried and others more prominent. The soil is dark brown to black, and there are many fine, light-colored roots and fibers scattered throughout. The lighting is somewhat dim, highlighting the texture of the soil and the segmented bodies of the worms.

In a way we share
an unspoken sacred trust.

I feel it in my body when it suffers,
from drought, from the weight
of tractor wheels,
and cheerful
when it feels light and airy
and the rainworm flourish.
I feel intimate and proud when
I manage to optimize soil health.

I feel strongly that we farmers not only
grow plants but rather soil.

-Trond Håkon Tingulstad, Norway



To be lucky enough to own the land and not ruin it is the most beautiful art form you could wish for.

-Valentina Sicca, Italy

I watch my soil through the seasons.
In the winter, I check if the soil absorbs the rain.
In the spring, you have the power of greens,
the vines are still dry and don't speak.
We need to control the heat in summer.
While in autumn, you look for cracks.
You don't want to see cracks.

–Lorenzo Magnelli, Italy





My place on earth,
it is where it is.
You have a responsibility to take care of that place.
You cannot move it.
You are where you are.

—Johannes Andersson, Sweden



My soil
is the most important,
venerable,
valuable resource
entrusted to me for my time.

-Farmer, Spain



I often walk across my soil
looking for signs.

Has the residue broken down?
Are there worm casts?
Can I see water sitting anywhere?
Does it smell fresh?
Or stagnant and horrible?

I feel we are moving away from the latter.
So, I feel good.


-Jo Franklin, UK



Encourage soil life with organic matter,
compost, cover crops,
spread lime,
avoid processing when it is wet,
loosen deeply,
turn shallow,
observe crop rotation
and take breaks in cultivation.

The soil delivers as you treat it.

-Farmer, Spain



My relationship with my soil
is one of discovery.
I go out and see all this magnificence.

Every day a new thing to discover.
The color of the ground, the granularity
of the soil,
worms and micro-organisms.

Everything must be cared for.
It is like taking care of a little cat
or a little dog.

-Valentina Sicca, Italy



If your soil is mostly clay,
you should give up the dream
of becoming a potato farmer.
You grow wheat instead.
You are where you are.

–Johannes Andersson, Sweden

Soil is timeless.
We work the same soil that has been here
for hundreds of years.
It gives a feeling of safety.

–Johannes Andersson, Sweden






My vines are like my children.
They are my responsibility.
You want to give your children the best.
A good house and healthy food.

That describes my relationship to my soil.
The house of my children.

–Lorenzo Magnelli, Italy



I live and breathe these soils.
I want to do the right thing for them.
I can't replace it, I can't import it,
I can't change it.
I have to work with what I have.

—James Price, UK



The soil is the basis of my business
and the success of my production.
I must preserve this inherited good
and pass it on to the future,
in better condition.

–Farmer, France

The soil is like part of the family.
It is quite a personal relationship.
You got to love it to understand it.

—Russ McKenzie, UK





I see it as my job to heal my soil.
To repair it.
Put it back to how it should be.
Give it as much as it gives us.

-Jo Franklin, UK



If my soil could hear me,
I would ask:
What makes you happy?
What do you need?
What do you not need?

I will treat you okay.

–Russ McKenzie, UK



Without good soil there is no agriculture.
Soil is our greatest asset.

-Farmer, Germany

I feel humble.
Our soil is cooperative,
kind and robust,
but also very fragile.

-Anna Palm, Sweden





Soil is fragile.
Vulnerable.

If you let your soil work 24 hours a day,
12 months a year,
it is always tired.

—Lorenzo Magnelli, Italy



It is written in the contracts
for farmers who rent land:
“The farmer will cultivate the soil
according to the practices
of the good father of the family.”

This is our claim.

–Niccola Chiucchiurlo, Italy

I have to be patient,
I have to wait
for the soil
that needs rests when it is wet,
needs greening during hibernation.
I have to be patient.
Let it regenerate.

–Farmer, France





If you learn what the soil says,
you can understand a great deal.
And learn to do well.

The soil tells you quite a lot if you observe.
The worm casts, how the root system looks.
What do I learn from this plant
about what the soil needs?

I feel humble.
I want to learn and understand more and more.

—Anna Palm, Sweden



We must keep soil fertile
to grow food and feed.
We must protect it.

-Farmer, France



Respect for nature
and the environment
comes from respect for people
and their work.

The land is as valuable
as those who work it.

–Nicola Chiuclurlo, Italy

Maintaining soil fertility
is to think about the future.
Plants thrive in intact nature.

-Farmer, Germany





I don't think
I talk to my soil.
Maybe I curse it
when it's very dry.

—James Price, UK



You need to listen to the soil.
What could I have done differently?
We don't always succeed.

All winter I have been away from my soil.
Now the snow is melting.
It is like seeing an old friend again.
We will strengthen our friendship.

If I look after my soil,
I get a new chance every year
to do better.
Right now, with all the joys of spring,
nothing stops us
from having a perfect year.

—Mikael Palm, Sweden



The soil is
the long-term capital
of the farmer
and the food security
for people and country.
Why isn't that taught
and understood?

–Farmer, Germany

I am pretty sure it thinks.
I don't know if it talks.
Put your spade in and dig it up,
it tells you everything about what is going on.

The roots go down easy.
There are lots of worms,
the good guys that do the work.
To see those is really satisfying.

—Russ McKenzie, UK



I promise my soil,
you will get my full attention.

-Farmer, Spain





Knowledge grows

Yara grows knowledge to responsibly feed the world and protect the planet. Supporting our vision of a world without hunger and a planet respected, we pursue a strategy of sustainable value growth, promoting climate-friendly crop nutrition and zero-emission energy solutions. Yara's ambition is focused on growing a nature positive food future that creates value for our customers, shareholders and society at large and delivers a more sustainable food value chain.

To achieve our ambition, we have taken the lead in developing digital farming tools for precision farming and work closely with partners throughout the food value chain to improve the efficiency and sustainability of food production. Through our focus on clean ammonia production, we aim to enable the hydrogen economy, driving a green transition of shipping, fertilizer production and other energy intensive industries.

Founded in 1905 to solve the emerging famine in Europe, Yara has established a unique position as the industry's only global crop nutrition company. We operate an integrated business model with around 17,500 employees and operations in 60 countries, with a proven track record of strong returns. In 2022, Yara reported revenues of USD 24.1 billion.

www.yara.com



Photo: ©Sune Eriksen/Tinagent
Agency: Geelmuyden Kiese AS
1 edition 2023
Production: Fladby AS
Cover: 115g Geltex
Inlay: 150g Amber Graphic

